Stampede at Mughalsarai station

*25. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA:
SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons who lost their lives and were seriously injured due to a stampede at Mughalsarai railway station on the 3rd October, 2007;

(b) if so, whether the matter has been inquired into, if so, the details of the findings and the action taken thereon; and

(c) the compensation given by the Railways to the next of kin of the dead and to those seriously injured?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) In the incident of stampede at Mughalsarai railway station on the 3rd October, 2007; 15 persons lost their lives, while 12 persons sustained grievous injury and 39 persons sustained simple injury.

(b) A Committee consisting of Chief Commercial Manager (PS), Chief Medical Director/East Central Railway and Sr. Divisional Security Commissioner/Railway Protection Force, Mughalsarai/East Central Railway, has been constituted to conduct enquiry into the incident. The enquiry by the above Committee is under progress.

(c) Compensation is paid only after a decree is awarded on the claim filed in this regard in the Railway Claims Tribunal. So far, no claim has been filed. However, the following amount of *ex-gratia* has been paid to the victims of the incident by the Railway Administration:—

(i) Rs. 15,000/- has been paid to the kins of each of the deceased persons after postmortem.

(ii) Rs. 5,000/- has been paid to each of 12 grievously injured persons.

(iii) Rs. 500/- has been paid to each of 39 simply injured persons.

In addition, Hon'ble Minister for Railways has enhanced amount of *ex-gratia* to Rs. 2 lakh per head in case of death. Payment of this enhanced *ex-gratia* is under process.

Transplantation of Human Organs Act

*26. SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any review of the Transplantation of Human Organs Act, if so, the details of the outcome; and

(b) what steps are being taken by Government to incorporate such outcome in the Act?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) and (b) A Committee was constituted by the Delhi High Court to review the provisions of the Transplantation of Human Organs Act (THOA), 1994, and the rules framed thereunder. After examining the recommendations of the Committee, it was felt that wider consultations with different stakeholders were required. Therefore, the recommendations of the Committee along with the comments of the Ministry were placed in public domain and the

suggestions/comments were invited. After considering the responses received, a national consultation was conducted on 18th May, 2007. A final review was organized in the Ministry in September, 2007. The general consensus that has emerged from the wide range of consultations is that the provisions of the Transplantation of Human Organs Act and Rules need to be made more stringent to deter commercial transactions in organ transplantation. In the assessment of this Ministry, most of this can be achieved by making suitable amendments in the Rules framed under the Act. It has also been felt that donation of organs needs to be popularized and encouraged through a National Organ Transplant Programme.

Crop diversion to produce bio-fuels in the country

*27. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that food prices are expected to remain high over the next decade, partly due to demand for bio-fuels as cropping pattern changes in countries like US or perennial factors like massive scale floods in major parts of India damaging extensively standing crops;

(b) if so, whether RBI has apprehended adverse impact on wheat and edible oil prices as a consequential effect; and

(c) what long-term measures, in co-ordination with Ministries of Energy and Petroleum and National Gas, etc. are proposed to be taken so that such a situation of crop diversion to produce bio-fuels could be avoided?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The Reserve Bank of India in their Mid-Term Review of Annual Policy Statement for 2007-08 (October, 2007) observed that food prices have continued to rule at historically high levels with no immediate relief from improvement in global supply conditions. The increase in prices has been driven by higher energy and fertilizer prices;low level of inventories; shortfall in certain crops mainly caused by weather related factors such as the ongoing drought in Australia; strong increases in the demand for crops particularly in growing economies of Asia and Latin America which are enabling their large population to spend more on foods; and change in cropping pattern in response to the US Governments incentives that are encouraging businesses to turn corn and soybeans into motor fuel. The price of corn, the main feedstock for ethanol production in the US, rose at the beginning of the year to ten-year highs. As this encouraged US farmer to increase their corn production, they decreased the supply of other agricultural products, with a subsequent upward impact on the prices of these products in world markets. Consequently, consumer price inflation has hardened in a number of countries, with food importers being most adversely affected.

(b) The Reserve Bank of India in their Annual Report 2006-07 mentioned that the higher international prices coupled with diversion of acreage from oilseeds towards coarse cereals, especially maize as bio-fuel feedstock, could further exacerbate prices of edible oils. Further, the latest assessment of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) mentioned that wheat apart from oilseeds is reportedly, also being diverted for bio-fuels.

(c) The country has embarked on a path of bio-fuel development by utilizing the enormous wasteland resources. Based on the recommendations of a Committee on Bio-Fuels constituted by Planning Commission, a National Mission on Bio-diesel with a special emphasis on plantation of jatropha has been envisaged by Ministry of Rural Development. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has formulated a draft National Policy on Bio-fuels which focuses on energy security through sustainable production, conservation and application of bio-fuels (Bio-diesel